

Canada, would, in the manufacture of flax, afford remunerative employment to the farmers and their families, by hand looms and spinning wheels." In 1859 both the "Agriculturist" and "Protectionist" contained articles on the subject, and in 1860, in the former paper, it is stated, "Flax is attracting much attention in various parts of the Province. The want of mills and markets is felt." The American war causing a short supply of cotton and a consequently increased demand for flax gave an unexpected impulse to this long neglected crop in Canada. One American journal, the *Scientific American*, called upon the people to prepare to sow "a million acres of flax" next year. The crop of cotton in the United States in 1860 had been 2,079,230,800 lbs; this supply was in a great measure cut off, and a substitute was required for it. The Canadian *Agriculturist*, and the Upper Canada *Board of Arts Journal*, in this year 1861, placed the subject and its advantages before the public. Mr. Mac-Crea, an experienced and extensive north of Ireland farmer, well skilled in the cultivation of the flax crop, had visited Canada, and seen some of the growing crops of that plant, and knowing the demand for the raw material which then existed in Ireland, upon his return to that country brought the matter before the public, and pointed out to flax spinners that Canada was a source from which they might derive the supply which they then so much wanted, and were using expensive efforts to promote the cultivation of in the East Indies. He asserted that "Flax could be grown equally good in Canada as in Ireland. Canada flax, if properly prepared, would be as good as could be produced in Ireland. He would sacrifice the seed, and not ripen the flax so much, to save it. By too much ripening the fibre was made coarse. The reason why steeping had not been adopted in Canada was that the market was always in the United States, as this article was good enough for it; the water rotting would be more expensive, and by it the seed would be lost." At a meeting on the subject held at Belfast, Mr. Ewart, a flax spinner, stated that "he was satisfied that they might expect better-flax from Canada than from India or Russia."

Shortly after, the emigration agent of the Canadian government, being in Ireland, brought the matter before a meeting of gentlemen in Belfast, interested in procuring large supplies of flax for spinning. He urged on the Belfast spinners to send out to Canada an instructor to teach the Canadian farmers how to manage this crop, but they declined to do so, well knowing that if they expended a large sum of money in teaching the

Canadians to produce a good fibre, they would have no guarantee that they would get any of the crops produced—the probability being that the demand for it existing in the United States would draw it over into that country, and none of it would ever reach Ireland to repay them for teaching Canadians to produce it. The cultivation and preparation of flax has since grown to great dimensions, but no steps have been taken to improve the quality of the article.

The census returns of 1851 and 1862 show that in 10 years Upper Canada had extended her production from 59,689 lbs. to 1,225,934, an increase of 1,166,245 lbs., whilst Lower Canada had decreased from 1,189,018 to 975,829, being a decrease of about 20 per cent. In 1862 an association for growing flax was formed in the County Elgin, and application was made to the Board of Agriculture for assistance, which, failing to obtain, they were unable to carry out their project to any extent worthy of notice. The *Board of Arts Journal* for Upper Canada (vol. 3) in an article in support of the cultivation of flax, details some of the encouragements given to aid its culture in Canada, and amongst others, mentions the annual prizes offered by the Canada Company, the Hon. Geo. Alexander, and others, the Agricultural Association's medal; Mr. Kirkward's report; Mr. Donaldson's letters; the Elgin, Sherbrook, and other flax associations; seed and machinery imported by the government; and lectures caused by them to be delivered in 1862 on the cultivation of flax.

The Canadian publications and journals of 1863-4 contain much information as to progress made by farmers to cultivate this crop; and by merchants and manufacturers giving out seed and establishing factories. The Board of Agriculture for Upper Canada, Mr. Donaldson, Mr. Walker and others have also, either by the delivery or publication of lectures, essays and letters, and pamphlets of instruction, endeavoured to promote the cultivation of flax, and urged upon the government to make appropriations for the purchase of seed, or to adopt other modes of encouragement; and many public meetings have also been held for the promotion of these objects. Mr. Letellier the Minister of Agriculture in his report for 1863 states that "upon examining the reports of the Agricultural Societies it is to be noticed that in general the prizes granted by these societies are chiefly for animals and grain," and adds, "it would I conceive, be highly advantageous so to amend the laws which govern these associations as to compel them to apply a portion of the funds at their disposal for the clearing of waste lands, for the improvement of the soil, and for the improved culti-